

## SAN JUAN COUNTY

The San Juan County is comprised of a group of islands nestled in Puget Sound in the northwest corner of the state between the mainland and Victoria, B.C. San Juan County is the only county in the state that is not part of an RTPO.

### *Major Transportation Facilities:*

Marine transportation services and facilities are the primary means for movement of people and goods among the islands and between the islands and the mainland. Washington State Ferries (WSF) is the chief service provider and an essential part of the transportation system within San Juan County. Ferry terminals on four of the islands provide hubs, which along with airports and public ports, landings, and marinas have a substantial effect on the quality of transportation. WSF also operates a paved park and ride lot for ferry customers on San Juan Island.



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The San Juan Preservation Trust

Aerial view of San Juan Islands

Three multiple-destination routes provide service between Anacortes and the islands. Vessels depart the mainland in Anacortes and stop at four island terminals — Lopez Island, Shaw Island, Orcas Island, and Friday Harbor. Daily service to Sidney, B.C. is also provided. Schedules and routes vary from year-to-year as well as season-to-season. An inter-island ferry provides service between the four island terminals.

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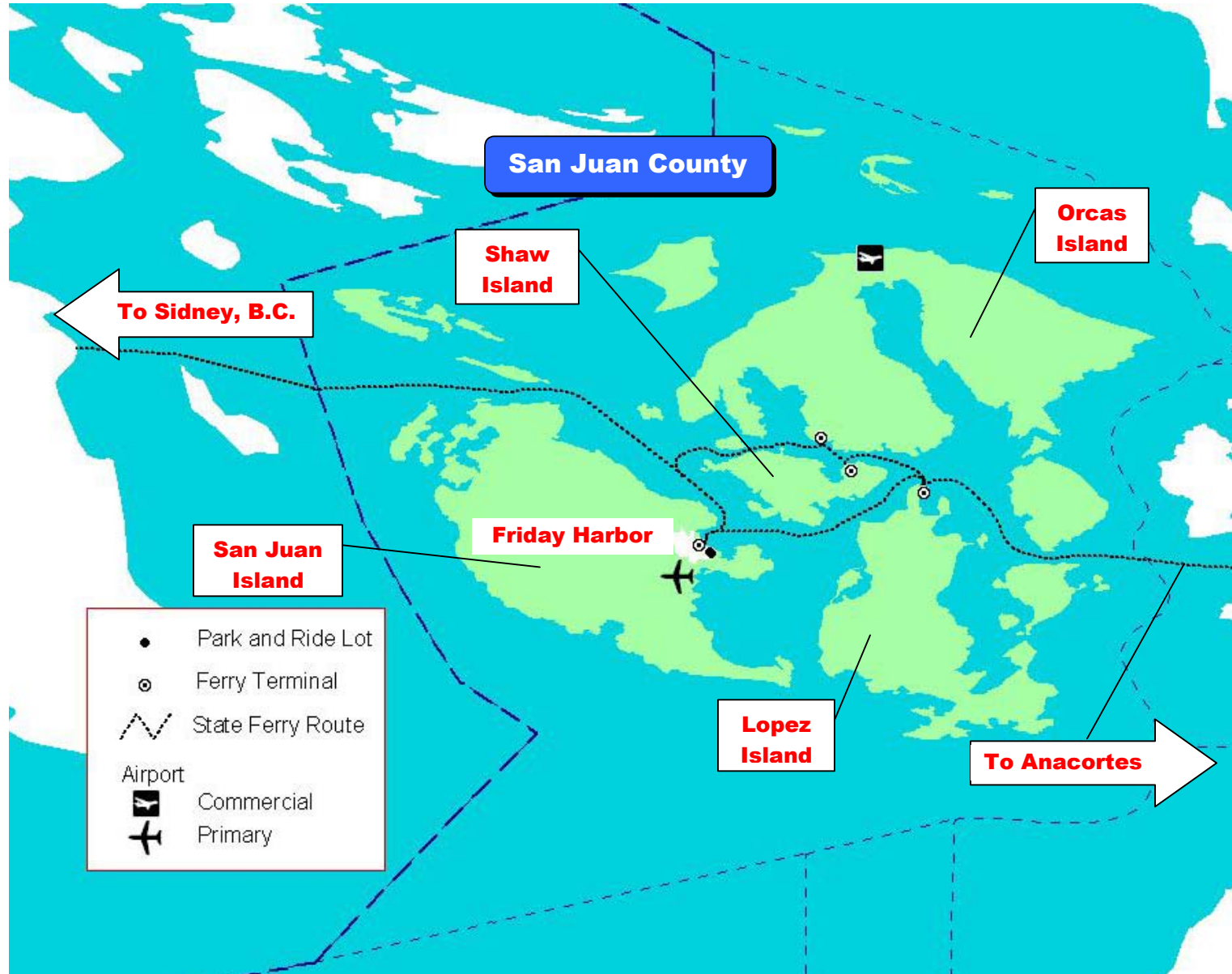
Annually, approximately 700,000 passengers depart from Anacortes, 6 percent of the WSF system total. More than 500,000 of these passengers are destined for either Orcas Island or Friday Harbor. Because of the rural nature of the islands and lack of transit in the San Juan Islands, only 13 percent of the passengers in this corridor walk onto the ferries; 55 percent drive their vehicles on-board, and the remaining 32 percent arrive as auto passengers.

### *Demographics:*

The age comparison of San Juan County residents to those of the rest of the state displays the predominance of retirement age residents. This has an effect on the types of transportation and medical services needed.

Age of San Juan County Residents (2000)			
	Less than 6 years	Less than 19 years	Older than 66 years
Washington State:	6.7%	25.7%	11.2%
San Juan County:	3.7%	19.1%	19.0%

	Population (2000)	Persons Per Square Mile	Median Household Income (1997)
Washington State:	5,894,121	88.6	\$41,715
San Juan County:	14,077	80.4	\$41,610



### Transportation Priorities:

Ferry Scheduling: Schedules and routes vary from year-to-year as well as season-to-season, but in general a greater number of larger vessels are employed in summer months than in winter. In addition, peak- and off-season demands



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Ferry in Rosario Strait, returning from the San Juans with Mt. Baker

increase with island population growth and continuing resort and tourist-destination development. Long-term planning for services and facilities must anticipate and respond to these changes so that efficiency and convenience are maintained. Due to increased demand, relatively long periods between ferries, and sharp peaking of demand on summer weekends, there are issues related to parking and congestion in the vicinity of these terminals.



Orcas Landing, Orcas Island

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#### Ferry Patron Parking:

WSF operates a paved park and ride lot on San Juan Island for ferry patrons just east of the upper auxiliary holding area. On Orcas and Lopez Island WSF provides parking spaces, but no park and ride lots. These spaces are heavily used and during summer months are at full capacity.

The following issues shaped the development of the proposed improvements in this corridor:

- Balancing service to all destinations within the corridor;
- Meeting vehicle demand versus person demand; and
- Operating within the constraints of single lane loading at the island terminals.



The WSF plan for San Juan County is designed to:

- Separate the routes from Anacortes so that each route serves one or two islands instead of the current system of dual, multi-destination routes;
- Meet additional vehicle demand to Orcas and Friday Harbor; and
- Limit the use of Super Class vessels in order to minimize dock time at island terminals.



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Roche Harbor, San Juan Island



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Friday Harbor, San Juan Island

The WSF plan includes:

- Terminal improvements to Anacortes and San Juan Island – minor improvements to improve loading capacity (2 lanes) and pedestrian improvements.

- A change in ferry routes. Instead of the current routes going to each of the islands, five routes will embark from Anacortes, including direct sailings to Lopez, Orcas/Shaw, Friday Harbor, Sidney B.C., and Orcas/Friday Harbor. The inter-island ferry would continue to connect island terminals.



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Fisherman Bay on Lopez Island